

# TELEGRAM

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AN: 0790054-0481

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA  
ICA-11 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 DODE-00 /073 W  
-----057874 050404Z /70

R 050330Z FEB 79  
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2047  
INFO RUSBOO/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABADHVIWRW  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L K A B U L 0841

E.O. 12065: GDS 2/4/85 (TAYLOR, JAMES E.) OR-P  
TAGS: PINS, UR, AF

SUBJ: REPORTS OF SOVIET CASUALTIES IN DOMESTIC FIGHTING

REF: (A) STATE 24344 (B) KABUL 343 11

1. (U) THERE HAS BEEN NO SPECIFIC DRA REACTION TO INTERNATIONAL MEDIA REPORTS OF DOMESTIC UNREST SINCE THE JANUARY 14 BLAST AT SBC STORES OF FIGHTING IN EASTERN AFGHANISTAN (REFTEL 9). NEVERTHELESS, IN A LENGTHY SPEECH ON JANUARY 30, NOOR MOHAMMAD TARAKI SAID THAT "FULL SECURITY PREVAILS ALL OVER AFGHANISTAN, FROM ONE CORNER TO ANOTHER." A STATEMENT WHICH UNDOUBTEDLY REFLECTS OFFICIAL AWARENESS OF NON-DUS RECENT FOREIGN MEDIA REPORTS OF INTERNAL TROUBLES.

2. (C) THE DRA HAS NEVER COMMENTED ON RUMORS OR MEDIA REPORTS THAT SOVIETS ARE INVOLVED IN THE ONGOING FIGHTING, AND HAVE BECOME CASUALTIES, SINCE, AMONG OTHER REASONS, SUCH A STATEMENT WOULD OFFICIALLY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE REGIME NEEDS DIRECT SOVIET SUPPORT TO CONTROL ACTIVE DOMESTIC OPPOSITION. WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE DRA WILL BE EXTREMELY RELUCTANT TO ADMIT PUBLICLY THAT SOVIETS ARE HELPING QUASH INTERNAL DISSENT, EVEN IF SUCH ASSISTANCE BECOMES PATENTLY OBVIOUS TO ALL OBSERVERS.

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3. (C) WE HAVE NO FIRM EVIDENCE THAT WOULD ESTABLISH

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THE NUMEROUS LOCAL RUMORS OF SOVIET CASUALTIES SUFFERED IN THE FIGHTING. WE ARE, HOWEVER, CONVINCED THAT SOVIET "ADVISERS" ARE PARTICIPATING DIRECTLY IN THE HOSTILITIES, AND IT WOULD BE CONCEIVABLE THAT SOME OF THESE MEN COULD HAVE BEEN WOUNDED OR KILLED. DUBS

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